



CORK CITY OPERA
THIRD
SEASON
OF

OPERA

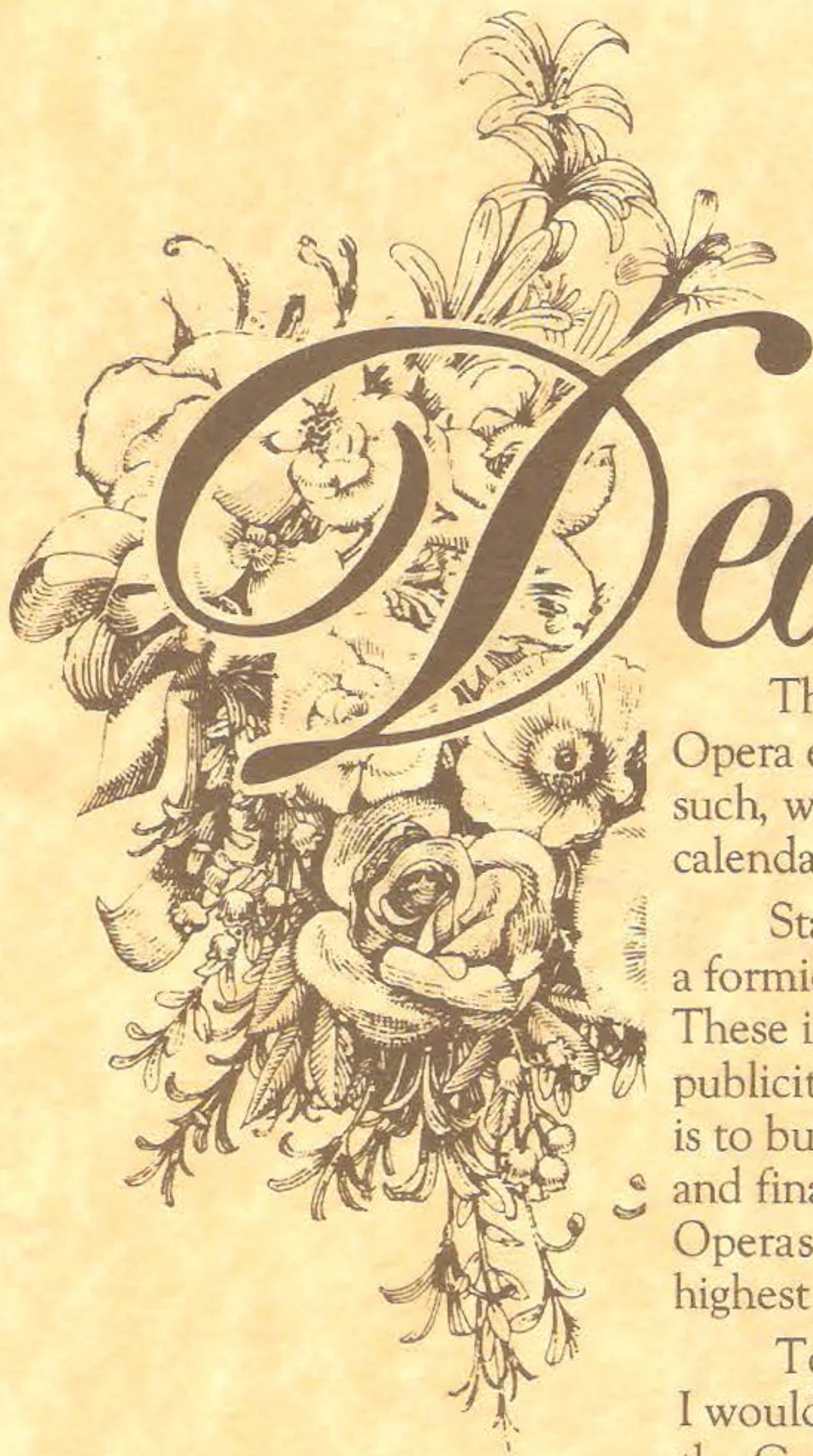
6-16 FEBRUARY 1985

Verdi's RIGOLETTO

Mascagni's CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

AND

Leoncavallo's I PAGLIACCI



Dear Patron

This February in Cork's 800th year, Cork City Opera embarks on its Third Season of Opera and as such, will be the first major musical festival in the year's calendar of events.

Starting from "scratch" just two short seasons ago, a formidable array of support groups have been built. These include wardrobe, hairdressing, costumes, publicity; sponsors and patrons groups, and the object is to build an Opera Company on strong, artistically and financially sound foundations, which will enable Operas to be presented at reasonable prices to the highest possible standards.

To ensure the continued success of this Company I would urge as many of you as possible to join one of the Company's support groups, either as an Individual



Sponsor at £100 p.a. or as a Patron at £25 p.a.

Our productions this year are "Rigoletto" and Cavalleria Rusticana with I Pagliacci" and we hope that all will enjoy the fruits of our labours.

Pat Dawson
Pat Dawson Chairman

Cork City Opera Directors
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This Programme has been Sponsored by

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Cork City Opera reserves the right to make unavoidable alterations without notice.

Cork City Opera

RIGOLETTO by Verdi alternating with
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA by Mascagni and
I PAGLIACCI by Leoncavallo

Third Season

CONDUCTORS

Proinnsias Ó Duinn
By kind Permission of R.T.E. Authority
Dr. Havelock Nelson

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By kind permission of Abbey Theatre
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Patrick Murray & Frank Conway

CHOREOGRAPHER

David Gordon
By kind permission of the Irish National Ballet Company

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Opera in three Acts by Giuseppe Verdi



Rigoletto

CAST

The Duke of Mantua..... Howard Haskin
Matteo Borsa, *a courtier*..... Brian Callanan
Countess Ceprano..... Carolann Lowe
Rigoletto, *his jester, a hunchback*.... Peter Knapp
Count Ceprano..... John Morgan
Cavaliere Marullo, *a courtier*..... Alan Rice
Count Monterone..... Frank O'Brien
Gilda, *daughter of Rigoletto*..... Miriam Bowen
Sparafucile, *a bravo*..... John O'Flynn
Giovanna, *her duenna*..... Sheila McCarthy
Maddalena, *sister to Sparafucile*..... Colette McGahon
Courtiers, Nobles, Pages, Servants

Quintet. Leader: Jessica O'Leary. 2nd Fiddle: Michele Murphy. 3rd Fiddle: Elaine Rice. Viola: Clare Desmond. Cello: Elizabeth Barry.

Juggler: Garvan McGrath.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Mantua in the sixteenth Century.

Act I Dukes Palace Act II Dukes Palace

Act III A dark night outside Sparafacile's hut.

R.T.E. CONCERT ORCHESTRA

By kind permission of R.T.E. Authority.

Conductor: Proinnsias Ó Duinn

By kind permission of R.T.E. Authority

Producer: Ben Barnes

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The Montfort Singers

Special Appearance of the Cork Barrack

Street Silver & Reed Band

Conductor: Paddy O'Callaghan

Verdi's development from initial failure, through his early, if conventional, successes, to the great masterpieces of his later years is one of the most fascinating stories in all the arts. Probably the most significant single composition among the twenty-six in this tale is "Rigoletto"; with it the 38-year-old composer quite simply created a new style of Italian opera. It was a unique achievement, welding words and music together

in a taut and brilliant fashion, which moved Italian opera away from being a succession of set-pieces to a well-knit entity.

Verdi had Victor Hugo's controversial play in mind for some years but it was only when another idea was not working out that he suggested adapting "Le Roi s'Amuse", first staged in Paris in 1832. The choice ran into many difficulties with the Austrian authorities who

were worried over the unfavourable portrayal of King Francois I of France on the stage. They rejected the text for its "repulsive immorality and obscene triviality". Eventually a deal was hammered out, with the location switched to the 16th century ducal court at Mantua; the jester Triboulet became Rigoletto. The premiere had already been postponed because of the censors and Verdi completed the score in less than six weeks, rehearsals beginning before he had finished the score. The premiere was at La Fenice Theatre, Venice on March 11th, 1851 and was a popular success though some critics were puzzled by its innovations.

Act I

After a short, menacing Prelude, the first scene opens during a party in the Duke of Mantua's palace. The Duke boasts he is having a splendid new courtship while disguised as a student. Always with an eye for the ladies, he spots Count Ceprano's pretty wife and spirits her from the room. His hunchbacked jester, Rigoletto, makes much fun of the Count's embarrassment. Marullo tells his friends that he suspects Rigoletto has a beautiful young mistress and they agree they must make something of this. Meanwhile the Duke is trying to offload Count Ceprano for the night but, while Rigoletto is mocking him, the elderly Count Monterone pushes his way in. He denounces the Duke for having dishonoured his daughter and, when Rigoletto pokes fun at him, he curses the Duke and the jester majestically. The Duke has the Count arrested but Rigoletto is deeply disturbed by Monterone's curse.

Scene Two: A dark figure offers Rigoletto his services as assassin and tells him to remember his name: Sparafucile. Rigoletto, alone, is still upset by Monterone's outburst and muses on his problems in a great soliloquy: he hates his own deformity, his job and the horrid courtiers he has to entertain. Going back to his house he embraces his daughter, Gilda, who only recently has joined him from the country. She is worried by his dark mood and, when she asks him who her mother was, he tells her she is long since dead and Gilda is his only remaining comfort. Meanwhile the Duke has slipped into the garden unseen and realises for the first time who Gilda's father is. When Rigoletto has left, the lovers are united; she believes him to be a student called Gualtier Maldé. He departs after a passionate farewell and she muses on his dear name.

Some courtiers gather in the street to abduct Rigoletto's "mistress". When he appears they tell him they are after Countess Ceprano and, blindfolded, he unwittingly helps them abduct his own daughter. Monterone's curse is beginning to take effect.

Later Verdi called "Rigoletto" his best opera and described it accurately as an "unending string of duets". The score is full of other innovations: the continuous flow of the music which blends recitative and aria into one musical tapestry; the powerful role of the orchestra in reflecting the meaning of the words, phrase by phrase; and the superbly taut dramatic structure, particularly in Act Three, one of the finest scenes in all opera with its remarkable homogeneity, even though it contains two superb show-stoppers. Overall, "Rigoletto" is one of the glories of Italian music.

Act II

Back in the Palace the Duke is delighted to discover what the courtiers have done and goes off to his room to meet Gilda. Meanwhile Rigoletto is morosely searching for any clues of her whereabouts and discovers to his horror that she is with the Duke. The courtiers will not let him near the couple, even when he tells them who she is and he roundly condemns them for their duplicity. Gilda rushes in; she is in obvious distress and he tries to comfort her. As Monterone passes by to prison Rigoletto swears vengeance on the libertine Duke.

Act III

It is a dark night outside Sparafucile's hut on the banks of the Mincio. Rigoletto arrives with Gilda; she still says she loves the Duke but he tells her he will soon show her what he is really like. The Duke arrives for a rendezvous with Sparafucile's sister, Maddelena. Having made his famous comment on the fickleness of women, he starts to court Maddelena and the great quartet gets underway. Rigoletto sends Gilda away to dress as a boy and flee to Verona where he will join her later. He gives the assassin a down-payment and agrees to return at midnight.

The weather is deteriorating and the Duke asks if he can have shelter for the night. As the storm breaks, Gilda returns on her own and overhears the plot to kill the Duke unless some substitute can be found. Still deeply in love, she decides to offer herself. She knocks at the door and is pulled inside. The storm subsides and Rigoletto returns at twelve. Sparafucile gives him the body in a sack and just as he is gloating over his success, he hears the voice of the Duke in the Inn. With mounting horror Rigoletto opens the bag to find a mortally wounded Gilda. She begs his forgiveness and promises to pray for him with her mother in Heaven. Monterone's curse has been fulfilled.

Ian Fox

Opera in One Act by Pietro Mascagni



Carvalleria Rusticana

Cast

Turiddu, a young soldier. Feliziano Flores
Lola, his wife Carolann Lowe
Santuzza, a village girl. Deirdre Crowley
Mamma Lucia, Turiddu's mother Sheila McCarthy
Alfio, the village teamster Neil Jansen
Villagers, Peasants, Boys Raymond Desmond, Denis Desmond.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENE

A village square in Sicily, on Easter Day after the last war.

R.T.E. CONCERT ORCHESTRA

By kind permission of R.T.E. Authority

Conductor: Dr. Havelock Nelson

Producer: Tom Hawkes

Designer: Patrick Murray

Sets built by Cork Opera House Workshops

Costumes: Mrs Frances Barry.

Children from the Montfort School of Speech & Drama.

"Cav. & Pag.", the operatic twins seem to belong together like Beaney and Barney but were never actually intended as a double act. Their premieres are separated by two years, one in Rome and one in Milan, and their composers, although both striving for the realistic, true-to-life approach of the "verismo" style, have very different musical personalities. Whatever their differences, they make a very happy couple; one-act or short operas can suffer because of their need for a partner to make a full evening's entertainment. This duo provides two outstanding examples of the late 19th century Italian style and their happy chance of partnership has ensured their frequent revival.

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA is one of those musical oddities: a winner of a competition which is also good box office. It is based on a short story and play by G. Verga; Eleonora Duse had great success with the latter. Mascagni had the plot in mind before the publisher Sonzogno announced his competition. The composer completed the work in eight days and then decided it was not good enough to enter. Fortunately his wife submitted it secretly, it won first prize and had a triumphant premiere at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome on May 17th, 1890. It was first paired with I Pagliacci in 1893 and the two have been staged together with great success ever since.

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA (*Rustic Chivalry*)


The opera takes place in a village square in Sicily after the last war. A Prelude opens the work, during which Turiddu's voice can be heard serenading Lola.

It is Easter Sunday morning and Santuzza, a village girl, is looking for Turiddu but his mother, Lucia, informs her he has gone to the neighbouring town for wine. Santuzza refuses an invitation to go into Lucia's home, explaining that she has been excommunicated. The reason for this is not stated directly in the opera but in Vega's play it is made clear that she is pregnant by Turiddu. Alfio, a carter and Lola's husband, arrives looking for a special wine and mentions that Turiddu has been at his house earlier and was not away. Lucia begins to suspect that something is going on; the villagers gather for Mass and sing the famous Easter Hymn.

Lucia quizzes Santuzza who relates the story: before he joined the army Turiddu had been dating Lola but she would not wait his release and married Alfio instead, now that he is home he is seeing Santuzza who loves him but also seems to be chasing Lola again. When he appears Santuzza confronts Turiddu about this and a great row breaks out, interrupted briefly by Lola on her way to Mass; the fight continues and Turiddu knocks Santuzza to the ground while she curses him for his infidelity to her. When Alfio appears again, she spills the beans to him and he swears to have his revenge.

The lovely Intermezzo bridges the time until the end of Mass and Turiddu and the villagers reappear. He leads them all in a drinking song but Alfio refuses to accept the glass from a man who has dishonoured him. The two men confront each other and Alfio accepts the challenge in the traditional manner: by biting Turiddu on the ear. Turiddu tells his mother that he has to go for a walk and, should he fail to return, she must take care of Santuzza as he intended to marry her. As she realises what is happening, Santuzza rushes in and they hear a woman screaming that Turiddu is dead.

Opera in two acts by Ruggiero Leoncavallo



Pagliacci

Cast

Tonio (in the play 'Taddeo'), a clown Neil Jansen
Canio (in the play 'Pagliaccio'), head of a troupe of
strolling players Feliziano Flores
Nedda (in the play 'Columbine'), wife of Canio
. Mary Hegarty
Peppe (in the play 'Harlequin') Brian Callanan
Silvio, a villager Frank O'Brien

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Montalto, in Calabria, the Feast of the Assumption, about 1900

R.T.E. CONCERT ORCHESTRA

By kind permission of R.T.E. Authority

Conductor: Dr. Havelock Nelson

Producer: Tom Hawkes

Designer: Patrick Murray

Sets built by Cork Opera House Workshops

Costumes: Mrs Frances Barry.

Children from the Montfort School of Speech & Drama.

I PAGLIACCI was partly prompted by the success of Cavalleria Rusticana. After some penurious travels as a cafe pianist, following a projected production of an opera which flopped when the impresario ran off with the cash, Leoncavallo had hopes of getting a further full-length piece staged. While waiting for developments, he concocted a little drama which so delighted Sonzogno that he quickly arranged a production. The premiere was a triumph under Toscanini's baton at the Teatro del Verme in Milan on May 21st, 1892. Leoncavallo prepared his own libretto and based the plot on a childhood incident when his father, a judge, had to try a case in which a jealous actor had murdered his wife after a performance.

I PAGLIACCI (*The Strolling Players*)

The Prelude is interrupted by Tonio, a hunchbacked clown, who comes through the curtains as a "Prologue", to tell us that the story we are to see is perfectly true. The curtain rises on a Calabrian village around 1900. It is the Feast Day of the Assumption and a group of strolling players arrive to entertain the villagers. Their leader, Canio, announces that there will be a show that evening. The villagers suggest to him that the clown, Tonio, is interested in his wife, Nedda, but he rejects the idea. When they have gone to Vespers, Nedda wonders about the gossip, too, but forgets it as she sings about the birds. However, Tonio is watching her and reveals his amorous feelings for her. She spurns him, hitting with a whip when he tries to kiss her; he swears to be revenged.

Nedda is actually having an affair with a villager, Silvio, and Tonio overhears them. He fetches Canio but they are too late to see who the man is. Canio demands the man's name but Nedda

refuses to reveal it even when he draws a knife. The other players separate them and, in his soliloquy, Canio contrasts his broken heart with the clown's motley he must now put on.

An Intermezzo bridges the time until the performance. The plot proves to be uncomfortably close to the real situation, with Columbine (Nedda) being serenaded by Harlequin (Peppo, one of the other players). Taddio (Tonio) attempts to woo her but is driven off by Harlequin. When her husband Pagliaccio (Canio) arrives, Harlequin flees. The parallel with that day's happenings becomes obvious and Canio again takes a knife and demands the name of Nedda's lover. When she refuses he stabs her and Silvio, who jumps up on the stage to help her, is also killed by the enraged Canio. Tonio informs the shocked audience that the comedy is over.

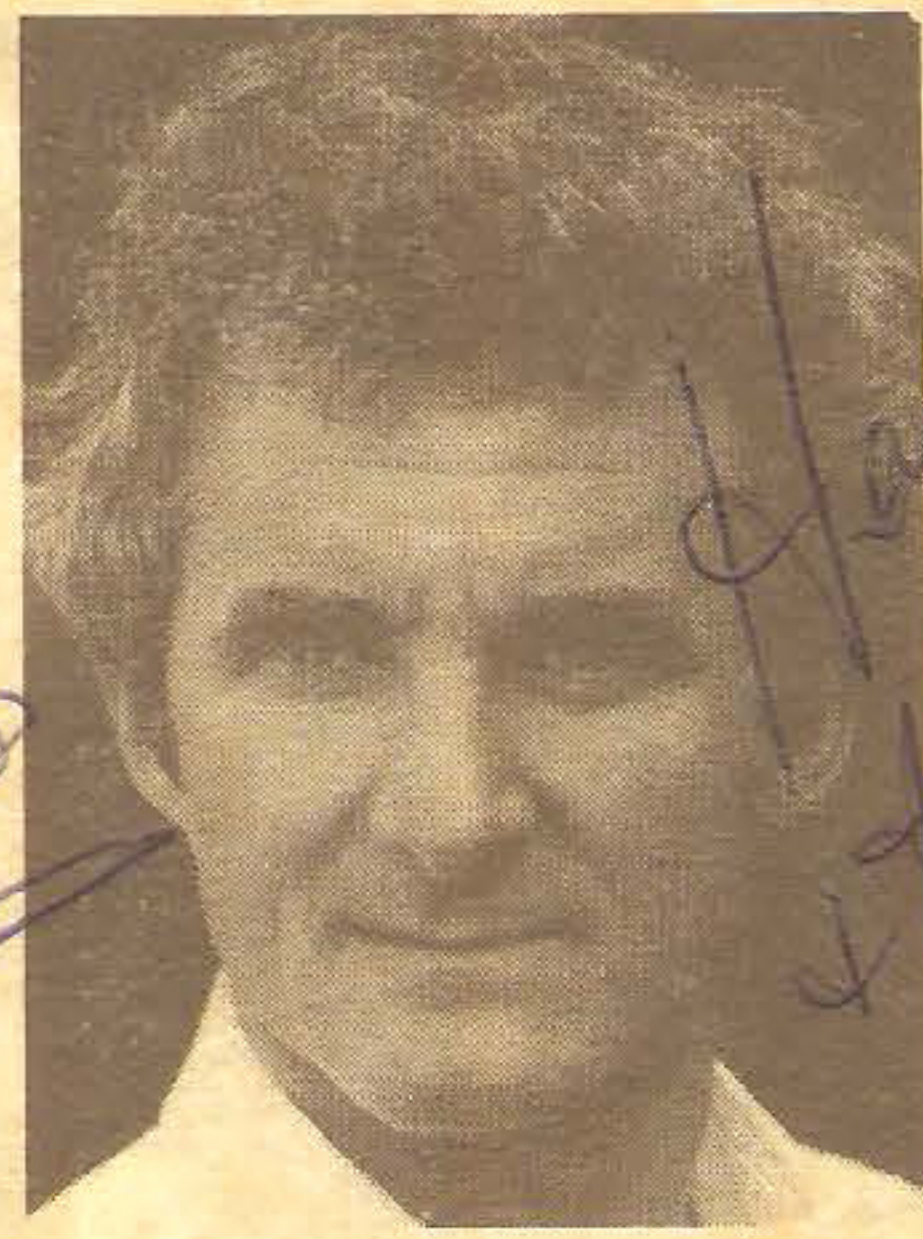
Ian Fox



Artistes



Colette McGahon



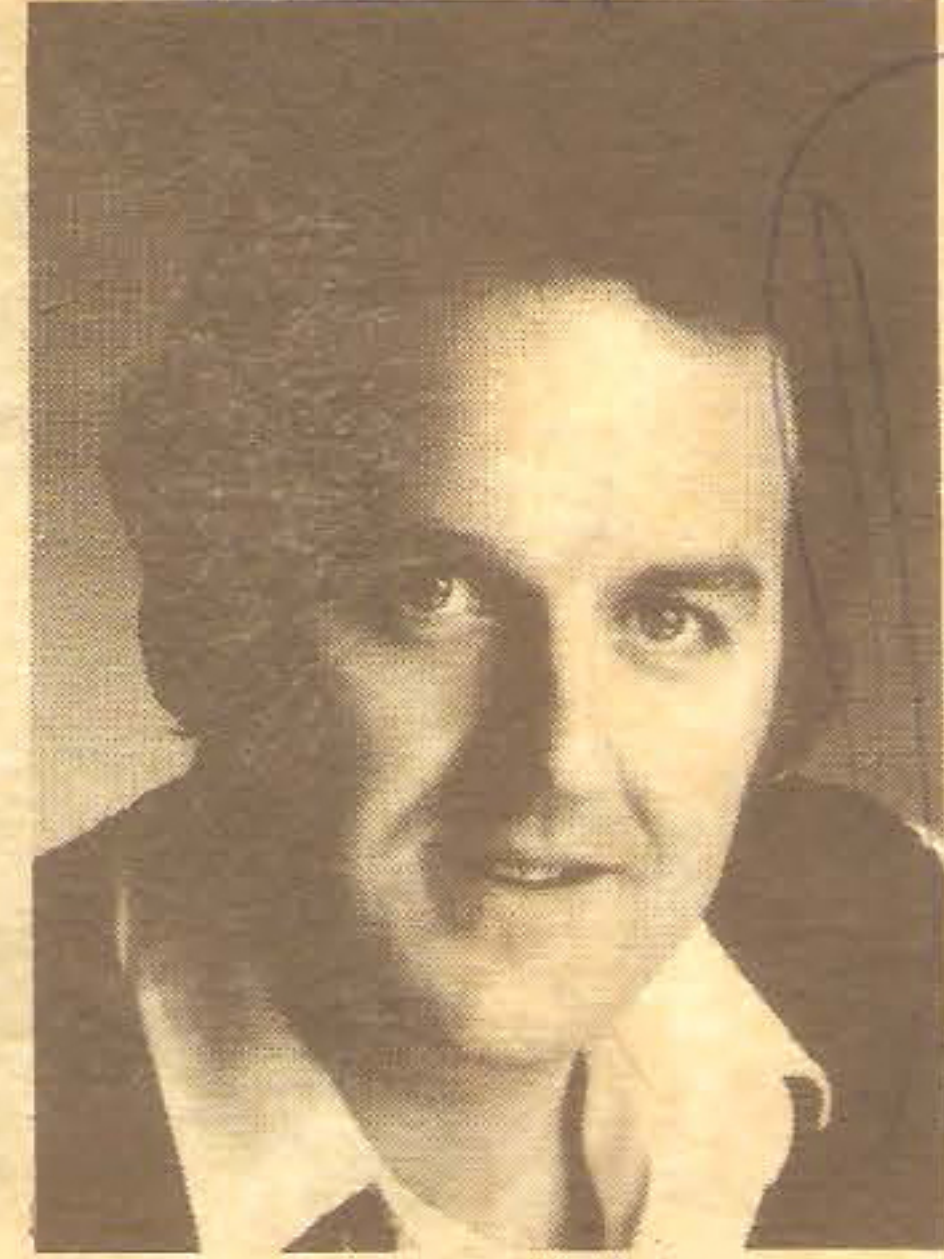
John O'Flynn



Howard Haskin



Miriam Bowen



Peter Knapp

Handwritten notes in blue ink:
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Have a Best week
Carolann your
so very best wish

To Patrick
Best wish
Frank 1985

Artistes

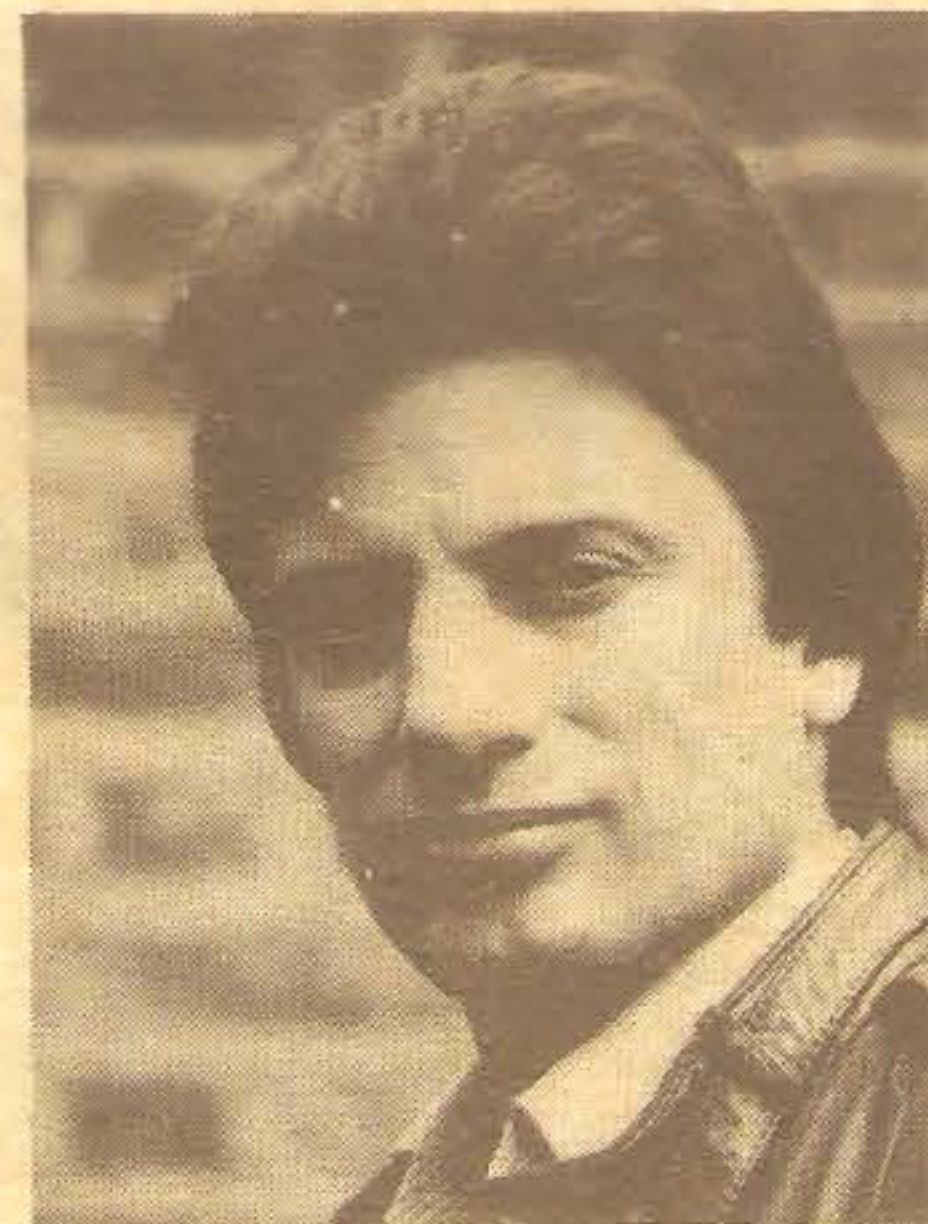
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Deirdre Crowley



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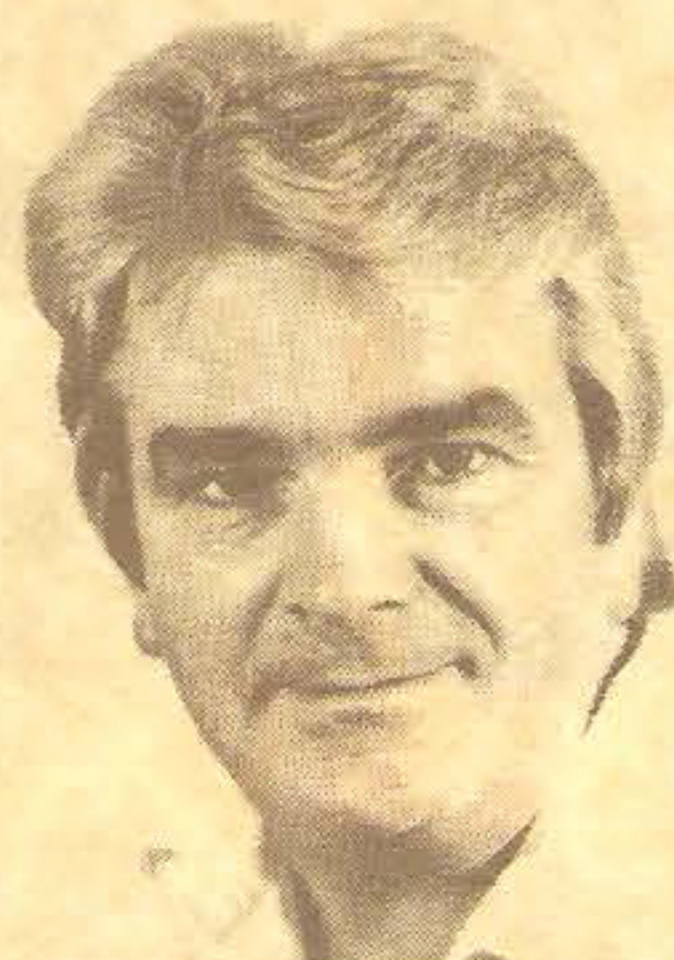
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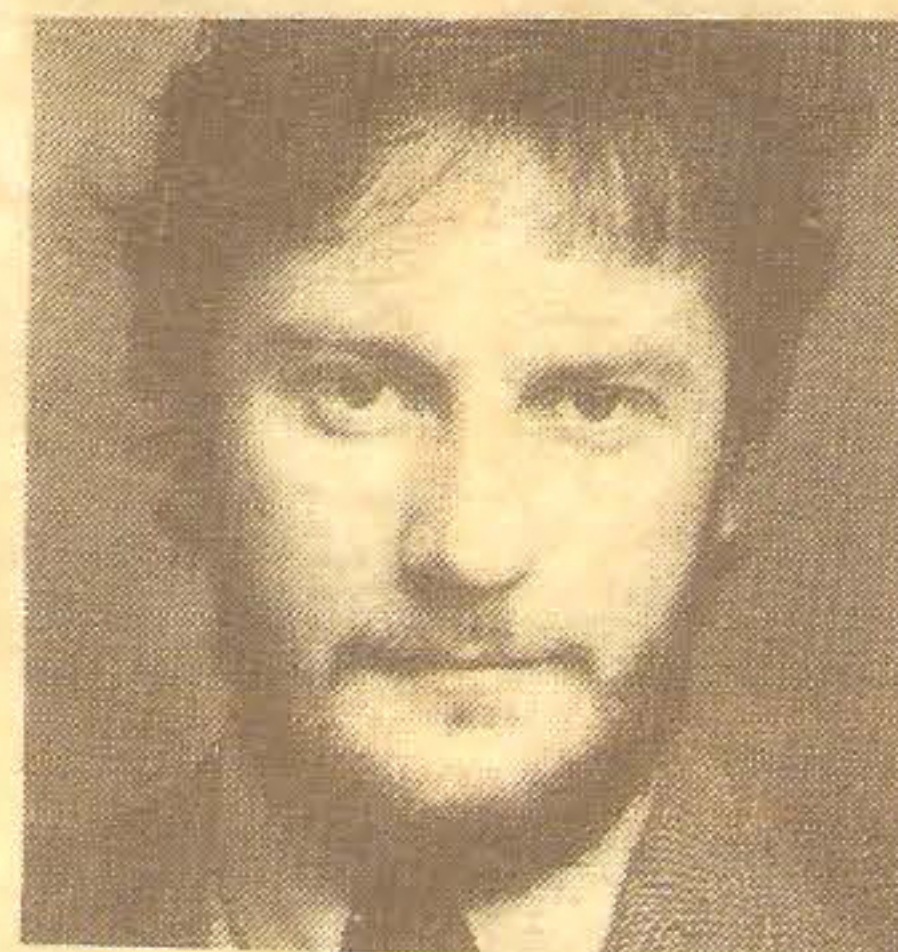
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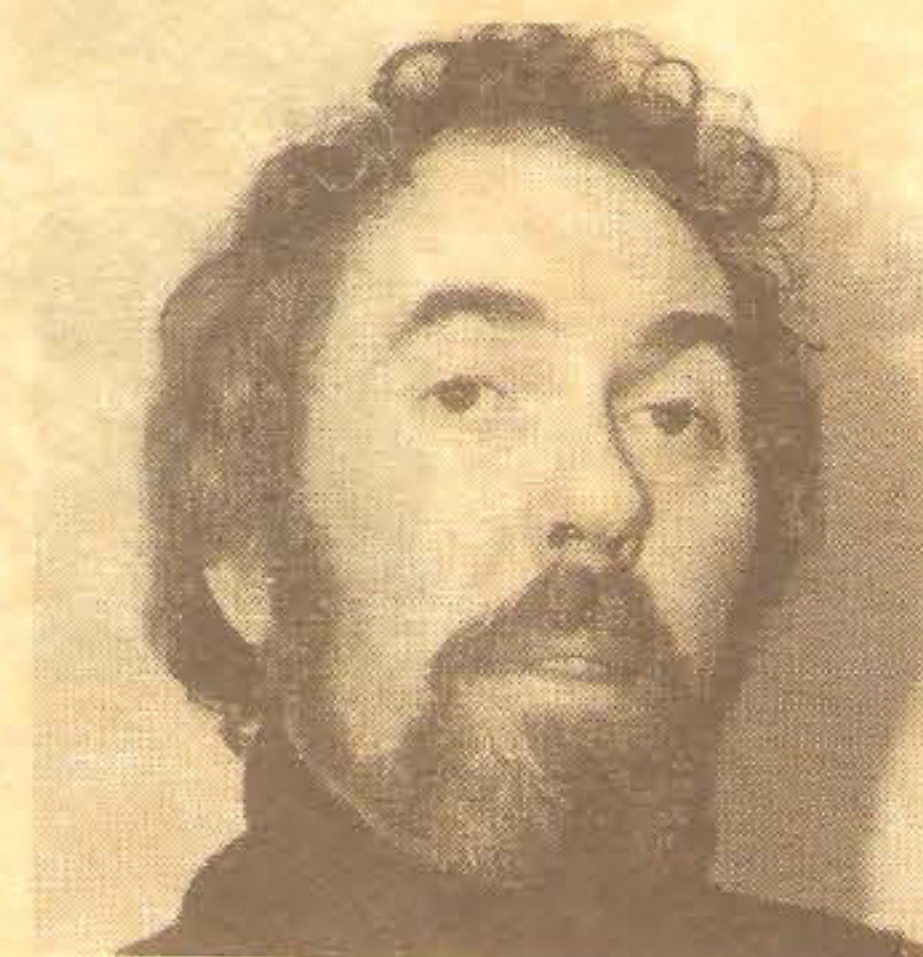
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Yours sincerely,

Bob Barry.

Bob Barry,
Hon. Secretary.

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CORK CITY OPERA

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Verdi's RIGOLETTO

FEBRUARY 6th, 8th, 12th, 14th and 16th.

Duke: Howard Haskin **Gilda:** Miriam Bowen **Rigoletto:** Peter Knapp
Maddalena: Colette McGanon **Sparafucile:** John O'Flynn
Giovanna: Sheila McCarthy **Borsa:** Brian Callanan **Countess:** Carolann Lowe
Count: John Morgan **Marullo:** Alan Rice **Monterone:** Frank O'Brien
Producer: Ben Barnes (kind permission of Abbey Theatre).
Conductor: Proinnsias O Duinn (kind permission of the R.T.E. Authority)
Chorus: of Cork City Opera and Montfort Singers.
Choreography: David Gordon (kind permission of Irish National Ballet).

Mascagni's CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

in CORK OPERA HOUSE

and Leoncavallo's I PAGLIACCI

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February 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, & 15th
Turiddu & Canio: Feliziano Flores
Santuzza: Deirdre Crowley
Nedda: Mary Hegarty **Lucia:** Sheila McCarthy
Lola: Carolann Lowe **Alfio & Tonio:** Neil Jansen
Silvo: Frank O'Brien **Pepe:** Brian Callanan
Producer: Tom Hawkes **Conductor:** Havelock Nelson
Chorus: of Cork City Opera, City of Cork Male Voice Choir,
and Cork Operatic Society.

Grand Operatic Concert

SUNDAY 10TH FEBRUARY, 1985

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